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Human rights questions: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Draft resolution submitted by the Chairman of the Committee on the basis of informal consultations

Situation of human rights in Nigeria

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming that all Member States have an obligation to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, as stated in the Charter of the United Nations and as elaborated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenants on Human Rights[2] and other applicable human rights instruments,

Recalling that Nigeria is a party to the International Covenants on Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[3] the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women[4] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[5] as well as the African Charter on Human and People's Rights,

Recalling previous resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Nigeria,

Welcoming the positive contribution which Nigeria has been making through the Economic Community of West African States in support of democratic governance within the West African region,

Noting the encouraging positive steps taken by the Government of Nigeria, which deserve full support and have been welcomed by the people of Nigeria as well as the international community, including the Commonwealth and the European Union,

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[3] Resolution 2106 A (XX), annex.
[4] Resolution 34/180, annex.
[5] Resolution 44/25, annex.

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1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the interim report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Nigeria;[6]

2. *Welcomes* the announcement by General Abdulsalami Abubakar of a new programme of transition to civilian rule and notes with satisfaction the commitment of the Government of Nigeria to fully restore democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights;

3. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the concrete steps taken to date to implement the transitional programme and looks forward to further measures in this regard;

4. *Expresses its full support* to the Government of Nigeria in the important process of building a peaceful and stable Nigeria rooted in the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights;

5. *Welcomes* the fact that the Government of Nigeria is reviewing the remaining decrees and urges it to repeal urgently those which have an impact on the fundamental human rights of its citizens;

6. *Encourages* all sectors of Nigerian society to participate actively and constructively in the process of democratization and the re-establishment of civilian rule;

7. *Notes with satisfaction* the establishment of the Independent National Electoral Commission and the issuance of a detailed timetable for the election process, to be completed with the holding of presidential elections on 27 February 1999 and the handling over to a civilian government on 29 May 1999;

8. *Welcomes* the invitations extended by the Government of Nigeria to the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Union to provide electoral assistance and to observe the elections at all levels in order to ensure the credibility of the electoral process;

9. *Welcomes* the declared commitment of the Government of Nigeria to protect freedom of expression, in particular freedom of the press, and notes with interest the first steps taken to reform laws governing the media;

10. *Welcomes* the release of political prisoners, including the twenty detainees from Ogoni and expresses the hope for swift clarification of remaining pending cases;

11. *Stresses* that the establishment and strengthening of national structures and institutions in the field of human rights are of utmost importance for the promotion and protection of human rights in Nigeria;

12. *Commends* the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria for its important work and encourages the Government of Nigeria to provide the Commission with adequate resources and to fully respect its independence;

13. *Calls upon* all States and the organizations of the United Nations system to support generously the ongoing transitional process in Nigeria, in particular the electoral process and the strengthening of national capacity in the field of human rights, and to respond positively to requests for technical assistance and advisory services;

14. *Welcomes* the decision of the European Union, the Commonwealth and the Government of the United States of America to start lifting sanctions on Nigeria in the light of the progress made towards the restoration of democratic government and respect for human rights;

[6] A/53/366, annex.

15. *Calls upon* the Government of Nigeria to abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the International Covenants on Human Rights and other human rights instruments in the implementation of the transitional programme and beyond;

16. *Calls upon* the Government of Nigeria to follow up the recommendations contained in the interim report of the Special Rapporteur;

17. *Welcomes* the invitation extended to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Nigeria to visit the country;

18. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the situation of human rights in Nigeria with a view to concluding it at its fifty-fourth session in the light of further developments and relevant decisions of the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-fifth session.